orders or instructions issued otherwise should be null and void.
And when the generals commanding the several divisions had expressed some doubt as to the interpretation of some provisions of the Reconstruction Act and the President had issued instructions concerning those points which displeased Congress, another act was passed which by way of explanation of the meaning of its predecessors, still further enlarged the powers of the military commanders and made them virtually rulers over everything and everybody in those States. In the meantime, to tie President Johnson's hands still further, the Tenure-of-Office Act had be« pas&ed, which was to curtail or hamper the President's power to dismiss officeholders from their places so as to reduce as much as possible his facilities for punishing the opponents and for rewarding the friends of his policy, and thus, as it would now be called, for building up an officeholders' * machine for his use.

President Johnson in every case promptly vetoed the bills objectionable to him or fulminated his protests against what he considered unwarrantable encroachments upon his constitutional prerogatives. Some of his messages, reported to have been written either by Mr. Seward or by Mr. Jeremiah Black, a man of brilliant abilities, were strong in argument as well as eloquent in expression. But they were not listened to—much less considered. Mr. Johnson had personally discredited himself to such a degree that his personality fatally

stood in his way in anything he advocated. No doubt some of the measures devised to strip him of power as President did great violence to the Constitution in spirit, as well as in form. But the quarrel between Congress and the Executive had so heated the whole atmosphere with political passion, that almost anything that would serve as an effective weapon against the antagonist was apt to be accepted as proper and lawful. The air, not only in